

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 NSCE-00 H-03 SSO-00

/024 W

----- 040432

O R 120956Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9470

INFO AMCONSGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 11632

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP TH (MANSFIELD)

SUBJ: RESUME OF CODEL MANSFIELD VISIT

1. SUMMARY: NOTWITHSTANDING UNEXPECTED DIFFICULTIES IN ARRANGING MEETINGS WITH PRIME MINISTER AND SPEAKER, CODEL MANSFIELD VISIT APPEARED TO BE SATISFACTORY TO THE SENATOR AND IT WAS HELPFUL TO HAVE A HIGH-LEVEL VISITOR FROM THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH IN THAILAND AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL MANSFIELD WENT DIREITLY FROM AIRPORT TO EMBASSY FOR BRIEFING AND SANDWICHES. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED SITUATION IN THAILAND AND U.S. / THAI RELATIONS. SENATOR'S QUESTIONS WERE CENTERED ON STATE OF THE ECONOMY, OIL EXPLORATION AND NARCOTICS PICTURE. FOLLOWING AMBASSADOR'S PRESENTATION, POLOFF TEARE FROM VIENTIANE DISCUSSED DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS AND CURRENT SITUATION. SENATOR AND PARTY APPEARED SATISFIED WITH BRIEFINGS.

3. PARTY THEN PROCEEDED TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE FOR MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER AND DISCOVERED ON ARRIVAL THAT THAI SECURITY GUARDS WERE DEMONSTRATING IN FORNT OF THE COMPOUND WITH AN ORATOR HARANGUING THE CROWD THROUGH A LOUSPEAKER. AMBASSADOR AND
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SENATOR WERE MET BY A GENIAL BUT FLUSTERED AIDE-DE-CAMP WHO EX-

PLAINED THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES THE PRIME MINISTER SUGGESTED THE MEETING BE CANCELLED AND THAT HE WOULD COME EARLY TO EMBASSY RECEPTION IN ORDER

TO HAVE A CHANCE TO TALK WITH THE SENATOR.

AIDE SAID HE HOPED PARTY WOULD LEAVE GOVERNMENT HOUSE AT ONE AS PRIME MINISTER DID NOT WANT SENATOR AND AMBASSADOR TO BE TRAPPED THERE. WE ARE SURROUNDED, HE SAID, AND THEY ARE CLOSING IN ON US FROM ALL SIDES. THIS RATHER DRAMATIC STATEMENT WAS INCORRECT AS DEMONSTRATION WAS TAKING PLACE ONLY IN FRONT OF PM'S OFFICE.

4. PARTY THEN PROCEEDED TO PARLIAMENT IN HOPE THAT PLANNED MEETING WITH SPEAKER PRASIT AND OTHER LEADERS COULD BE ADVANCED. AFTER PROLONGED DESULTORY DISCUSSION WITH VARIOUS PARLIAMENTARIANS IN A CLTAK ROOM IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE ON-GOING DEBATE COULD NOT BE ADJOURNED AND SPEAKER WAS UNAVAILABLE. PARTY THEN RETURNED TO HOTEL. SENATOR AND HIS PARTY TOOK THIS DOUBLE FIASCO WITH GOOD GRACE.

5. AT EMBASSY RECEPTION SENATOR HAD OPPORTUNITY FOR FAIRLY EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER, SENI PRAMOT, POTE SARASIN AND THANAT KHOMAN. GENERAL THEME OF THE THAI WAS CONTINUING DESIRE TO MAINTAIN HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S. PRIME MINISTER STAYED THROUGHOUT RECEPTION.

6. CODEL MANSFIELD DEPARTED ON SCHEDULE. ALTHOUGH VISIT WAS SHORT AND AFTERNOON WAS IN FACT ABORTIVE, PRESS COVERAGE AND OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED TO MEET SENIOR THAI OFFICIALS WAS MOST USEFUL TO EMBASSY AND WE HOPE THE VISIT WAS HELPFUL TO CODEL MANSFIELD NOTWITHSTANDING THE DIFFICULTIES THAT IT ENCOUNTERED. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO11632
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750857/aaaabyde.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION A
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESUME OF
TAGS: OREP, TH, (MANSFIELD)
To: SECSTATE WASHDC AMCONSGEN HONG KONG MANILA RANGOON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006